

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY 09, 2002

The Program Policy and Structure Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, January 09, 2002 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Kenneth Jackson of the New York State Department of Health. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to address the agenda items as follow.

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Jackson called the meeting to order and took attendance.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the Conference held on December 06, 2001 were reviewed and approved as amended.

NELAC 71 DEBRIEFING

Dr. Jackson began by reviewing issues addressed at the Conference:

- Analyte groups need no further action
- Data Integrity—waiting for Chapter 5 Committee's next step. Art Burton has heard from Quality Systems chair that Robert Di Rienzo will coordinate with this Committee by February 28, 2002 with a place in which to insert the Data Integrity Plan into Chapter 5.
- Fields of Accreditation tables—Dr. Jackson received only a few comments, so there is nothing to be done at this time. He will try to put the rest of the tables together by NELAC 8.
- Constitution and Bylaws will be a project this Committee will be working on.
- Glossary—PBMS will be approaching this Committee for help with terms. Elaine Sorbet will contact all the chairs from the committees, looking for inconsistencies in their documents. This will be done prior to NELAC 8.

RESTRUCTURING OF NELAC

The Program Policy and Structure Committee will be working closely with the Transition Committee in proposing a restructuring of NELAC and a modified Constitution and Bylaws. Dr. Jackson presented the following outline as an outcome of discussions which transpired at the December 19, 2001 Transition Committee teleconference.

I. PROPOSAL: THE PRESENT NELAC WILL BE SPLIT INTO TWO ORGANIZATIONS:

- A. A Standards-development organization, to retain the name "NELAC".

This would be as similar to the present NELAC as we can make it, except the private sector would

have full and equal participation with balanced representation on the Board of Directors. Discussion ensued recommending that the NELAC Director and Executive Secretary should be on the Board as ex-officio members. The chairperson would be elected by the Board. It was suggested that each constituency should elect its own Board members (e.g., the states would elect three state members).

It was asked if the change to the Constitution and Bylaws might impact the state laws and regulations. Consensus of the group was that it would not impact them. Dr. Jackson stressed that it was imperative to involve the private sector and transition to the new organization as soon as possible.

It was suggested that this new NELAC would be managed by a non-profit organization, totally independent of EPA.

- B. A standards-adoption organization, yet to be named.

This would have government-only membership, and would remain under the auspices of EPA.

It was suggested that only two Committees may be needed: an Operations Committee; and an Accrediting Authorities Committee, with membership potentially limited to NELAP AAs.

This organization can not be managed by a non-profit organization. At least initially, continued EPA support would be required.

II. SCHEDULING AND CONDUCTING MEETINGS

It was suggested that the standards should be presented in a way to give voting members adequate time to review any changes before voting. This might be done by having the new NELAC finalizing the standards six months before the standards-adoption organization votes on adopting the standards.

It was suggested that in order to encourage more states to become Accrediting Authorities, the conference location not be limited to only NELAP AA states. By having a conference in a state that has not yet adopted the NELAC standards, it might provide a good opportunity for such a state to make strides in becoming a NELAP AA by familiarizing their government officials with NELAC. It was asked who would organize the conferences. It was suggested that the non-NELAP states be queried at the next Annual Meeting as to their willingness to host a meeting. It was also suggested to move the conference around in the 10 EPA regions.

III. ACTION

- A. The Program Policy and Structure Committee will propose the Constitution and Bylaws and the structure of both organizations.
- B. The immediate priority is to develop the Constitution and Bylaws of the Standards Adoption organization.

The general structure will be proposed by the Transition Committee, with the details to be worked out by the Program Policy and Structure Committee. Dr. Jackson pointed out that until the structures

of the Board of Directors and committees are developed, this Committee cannot begin work on developing the Constitution and Bylaws. It was suggested to have a joint meeting with Transition Committee. Since the Transition Committee is planning on having a face-to-face meeting in early March, Dr. Jackson will propose that the Program Policy and Structure Committee also attend that meeting.

IV. TIMELINES

- A. EPA has encouraged NELAC to develop the new structure as rapidly as possible. The Program Policy and Structure and the Transition Committees will work in parallel and review their progress in March.

NEW “NELAC” CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

This will be discussed at the next teleconference

FUTURE TELECONFERENCES

The next teleconference is scheduled for January 23, 2002 at 11:00 a.m. EST.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 09, 2009**

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	No action items at this time.	

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PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 09, 2002**

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